



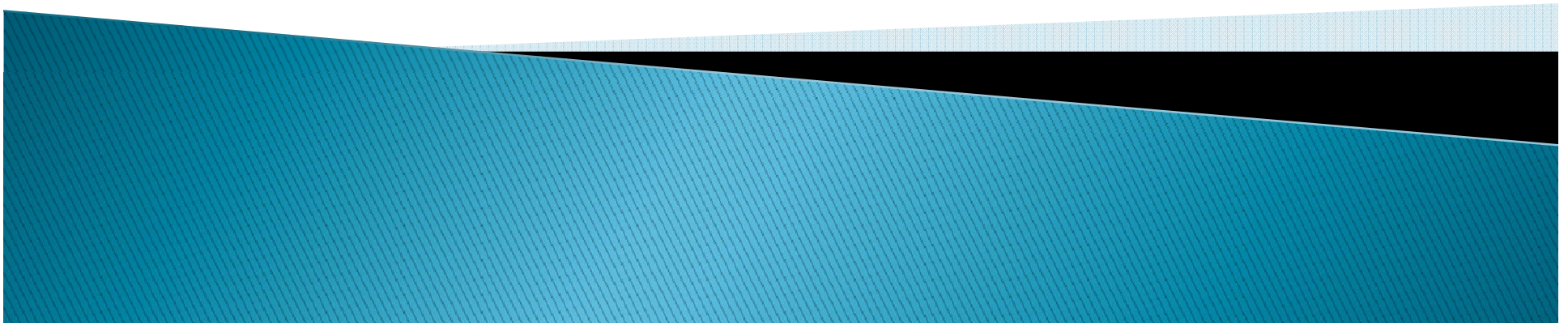
Connecting People Through Events

Social Media Platforms and Technology, Winter Term (Samantha Moscheck, Instructor)

UW Social Media Technologies & Implementation Certificate Program

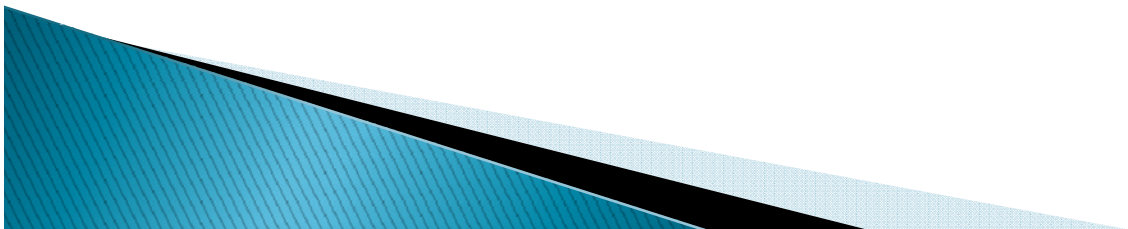
March 12, 2012

Diana McSweeney



What is ?

- ▶ Meetup.com is an online social networking portal that facilitates offline group meetings in various localities around the world— in fact, it's the *world's largest* network of local groups.
- ▶ Meetup allows members to find and join groups unified by a common interest, such as politics, books, games, movies, health, pets, careers or hobbies.
- ▶ Users enter their ZIP code or their city and the topic they want to meet about, and the website helps them arrange a place and time to meet.





Origins

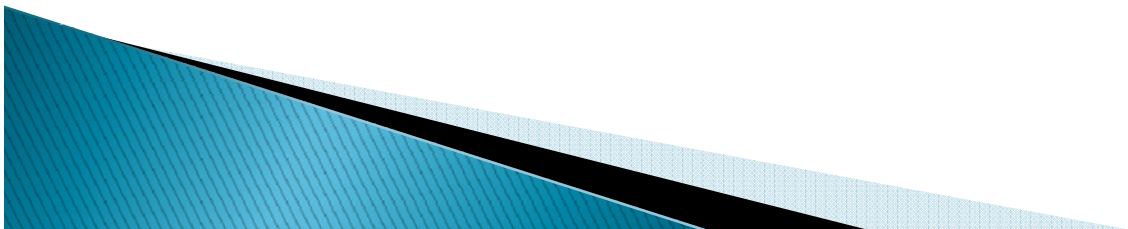
- ▶ CEO Scott Heiferman created Meetup in 2002, after being struck by the way people in New York connected with each other after 9/11.
- “Meetup CEO Talks About Doing What You Love” (video)
<http://celiasankar.com/blog/2011/11/16/meetup-ceo-talks-about-doing-what-you-love/>





**“Do something. Learn something.
Share something. Change Something.”**

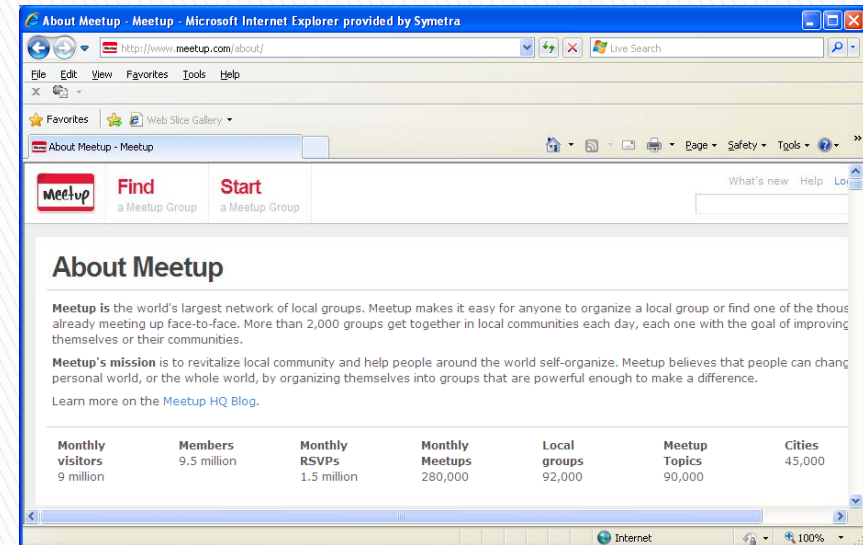
- ▶ In early 2003, Democratic hopeful Howard Dean attended a NYC Meetup, where 300 supporters were waiting to meet him.
- ▶ Meetup quickly became the engine of Dean’s campaign.
- ▶ When they began, the leading Meetup Group was for witches—with 15,000 members. The Dean Group had 3,000.
- ▶ By November 2003, three thousand passionate Dean Meetup members had turned into 140,000—and helped raise \$15MM (mostly small donations)—setting (a then) one-quarter record for a Democratic candidate in a presidential race.
- ▶ *“We fell into this by accident. I wish I could tell you we were smart enough to figure this out. But the community taught us. They seized the initiative through Meetup. They built our organization for us before we had an organization.” Howard Dean*





Global Snapshot

- ▶ 9.5 million users worldwide
- ▶ 280,000 monthly meetups
- ▶ 92,000 monthly local groups
- ▶ 90,000 meeting topics
- ▶ Presence in 45,000 cities



- ▶ Just became profitable in 2010

The stats

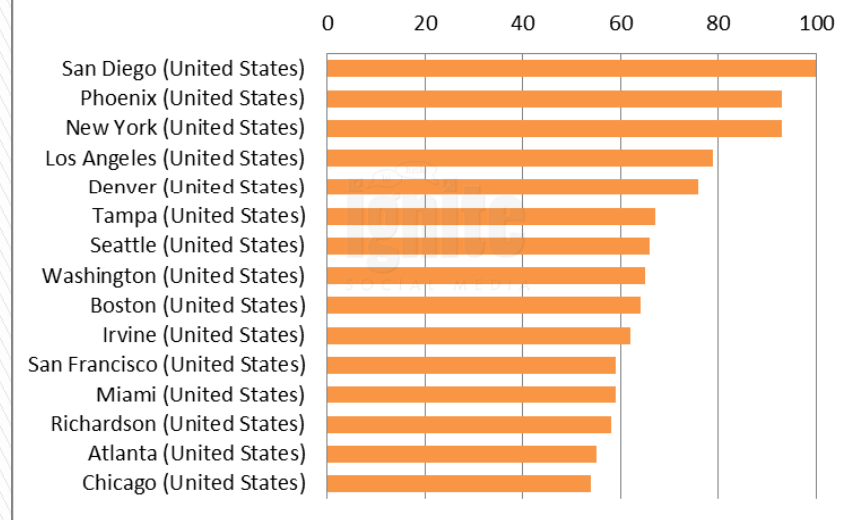
Where they are



User Profile, Top Locations

- ▶ Members are approx. 60% women
- ▶ General age range: 25–54
- ▶ Largest user group 35–44 years old
- ▶ Income \$50–\$75K
- ▶ U.S. is top region, followed by Canada, U.K. and Australia
- ▶ Top 5 (U.S.) Meetup cities:
 - San Diego
 - Phoenix
 - New York
 - Los Angeles
 - Denver

Top Cities For Meetup.com



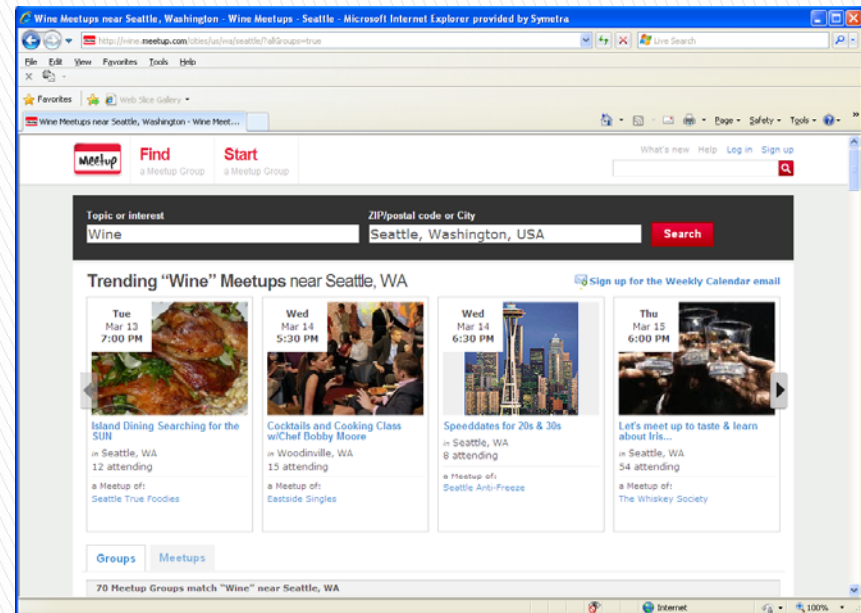
Who they are

Where they are (Source: Ignite, 2011)



is pretty simple ...

- ▶ Type in a topic and a location.
- ▶ The search returns a list of groups matching the keyword in the user's area.
- ▶ Users can see an overview of the group, its calendar of scheduled meetings, members and photos.

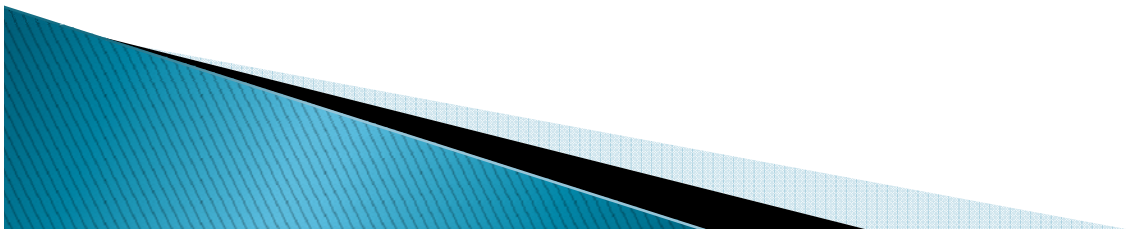


Easy to use

Pick a topic, any topic

Who's ready to ?

- ▶ Anyone searching for a local group to **join** in a particular area of interest.
 - Users can also see a group's mailing list, message members of the group or join the group.
- ▶ Users who want to **start** a group centered around a particular topic or interest.
 - Easy-to-use management solution for group leaders (also provides excellent vehicle for adding new members).
 - The site offers features to promote the group, schedule and manage meetings, post the group's calendar, maintain a group blog, manage the group's mailing list, conduct polls and collect membership dues.



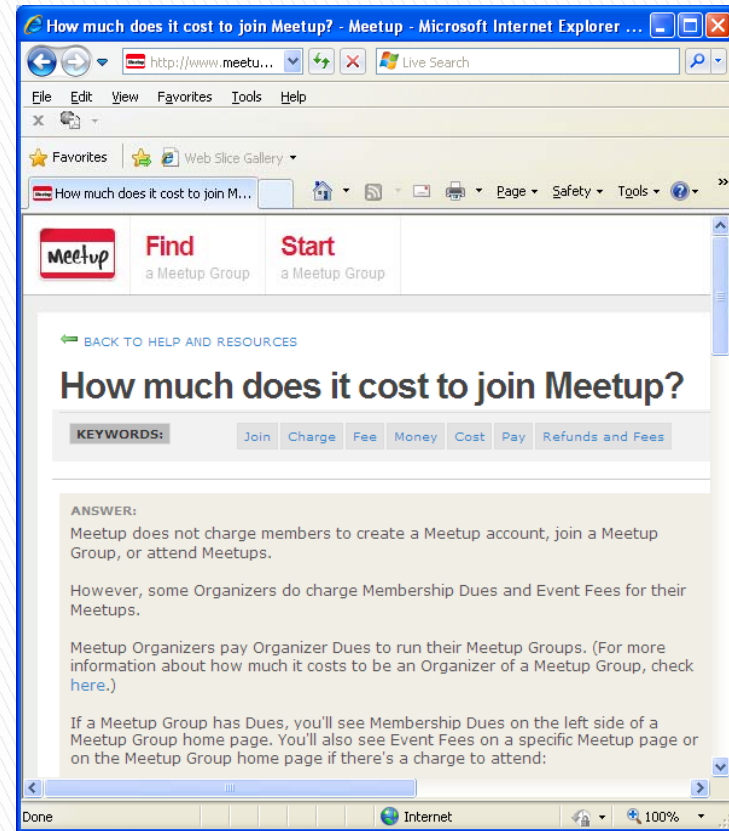
Cost to Join = \$0—Sweet!

It doesn't cost a thing to:

- ▶ Create a Meetup account
- ▶ Join a Meetup Group
- ▶ Attend Meetups

However ...

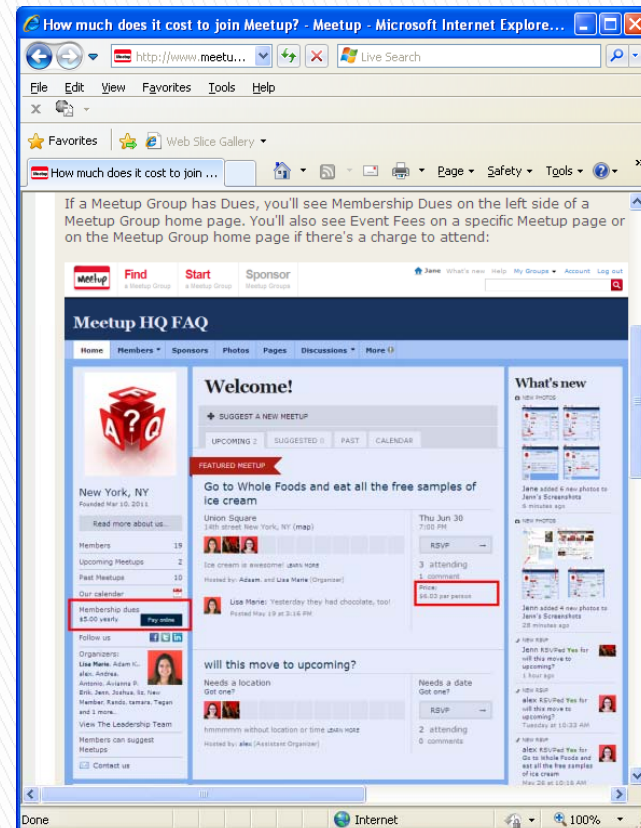
Free to join





- ▶ If a Meetup Group has dues, you'll see "Membership Dues" on the left side of a Meetup Group homepage.
- ▶ You'll also see "Event Fees" on a specific Meetup page or on the Meetup Group home page, if there's a charge to attend.

Left side: dues



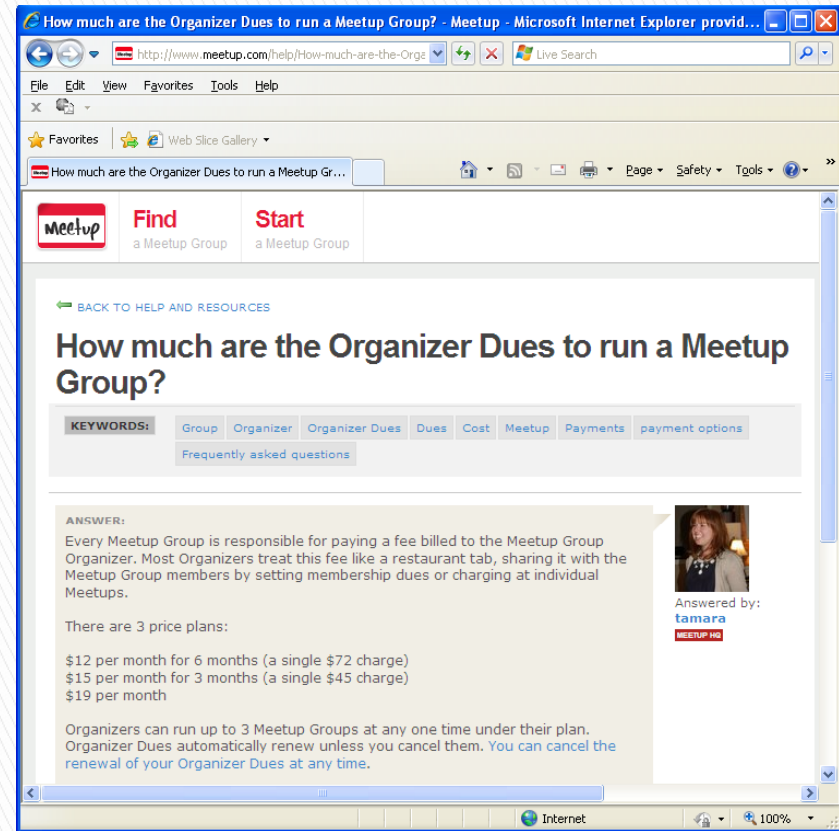
Middle: event fee



Organizer Costs

- ▶ Group organizers required to pay a fee on behalf of the Group.
- ▶ 3 price plans available:
 - \$12 a month for 6 months
 - \$15 a month for 3 months
 - \$19 a month

Three plans



<http://www.meetup.com/help/How-much-are-the-Organizer-Dues-to-run-a-Meetup-Group>



New Look for Groups*

(*following a bit of tweaking—and Tweeting!)

- ▶ Unveiled in Jan. 2011
- ▶ Initial reaction—unhappy members and organizers
 - Backlash generated 2 Twitter hashtags: [#newmeetup](#) and [#meetuporganizersunite](#)
- ▶ Meetup listened to the feedback and incorporated it into the Groups redesign, which was completed in September 2011
- ▶ Apparently, all is forgiven because



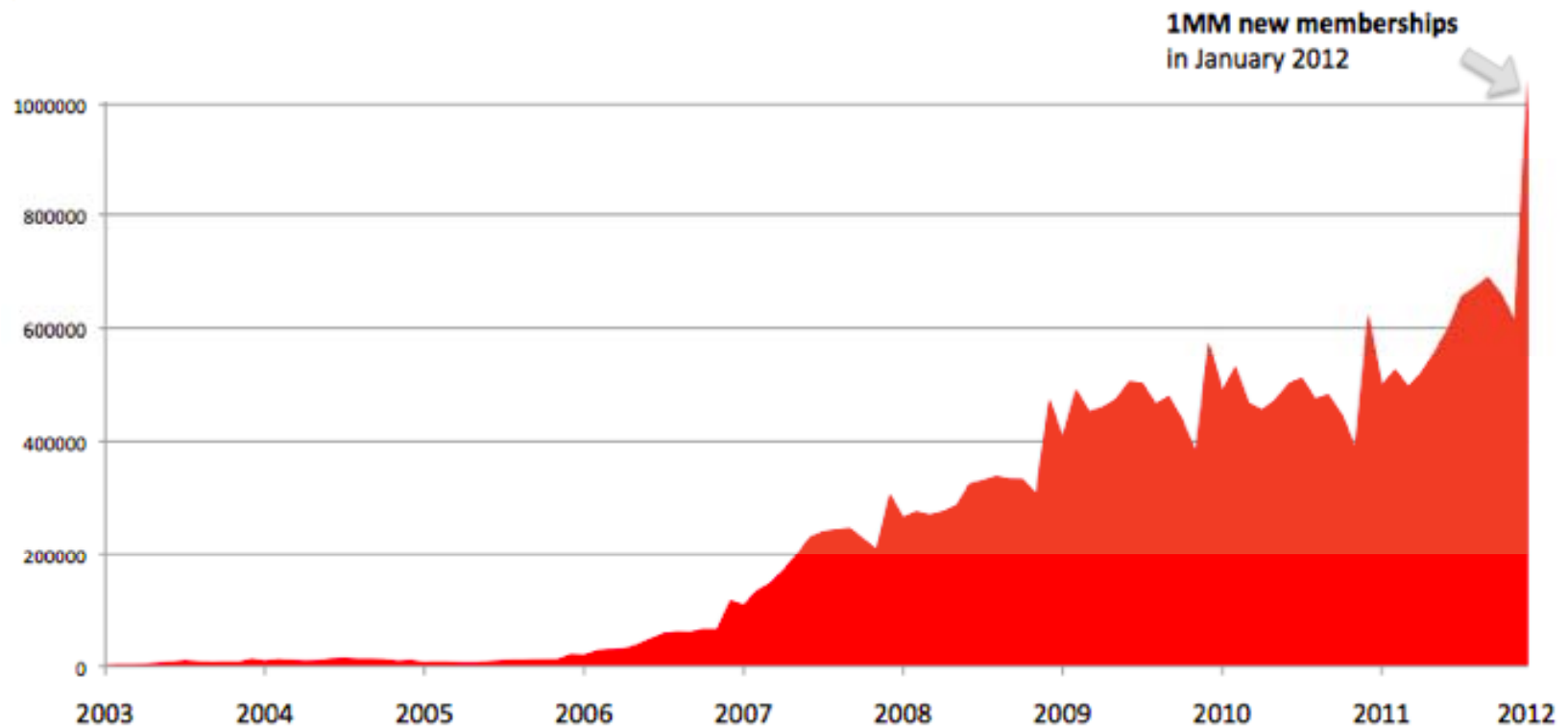
Redesign

LINK TO VIDEO HIGHLIGHTING MEETUP GROUPS' NEW LOOK
<http://meetupblog.meetup.com/2011/05/new-look.html>



Group Usage Growing By Leaps and Bounds

Meetup Group Joins





'Wearing Out, Not Rusting Out'

- ▶ “Social group for us, 40 plus”
- ▶ Created by Betsy Orloff (new city, no friends) in May 2008
- ▶ 1st event 6 people signed up—3 people showed up (including Orloff)
- ▶ Today—1800+ events and 3,400 members later—it's the biggest the biggest Meetup Group in the Twin Cities



#1 Meetup Group in Minneapolis

<http://www.meetup.com/wonro40/members/>



'Wearing Out, Not Rusting Out'

- ▶ Upcoming Event tab allows users to
 - See how many events are coming up (40!)
 - Learn more about an individual event and location
 - See who's hosting and who's RSVP'd
 - Learn more about the "host" and "guests"
 - View any "comments"
- ▶ Past Event tab features
 - Event summary
 - Event "ratings" (1–5 stars) and how many ratings the event received
 - Information on the next time the event will take place



Definitely not wearing out!

<http://www.meetup.com/wonro40/members/>



'Wearing Out, Not Rusting Out'

- ▶ Calendar tab allows users to
 - See events further out
 - E.g., Saturday, July 7, meetup at 11 PM for "Midnight-to-Dawn Metro Bike Tour"



Expanded calendar

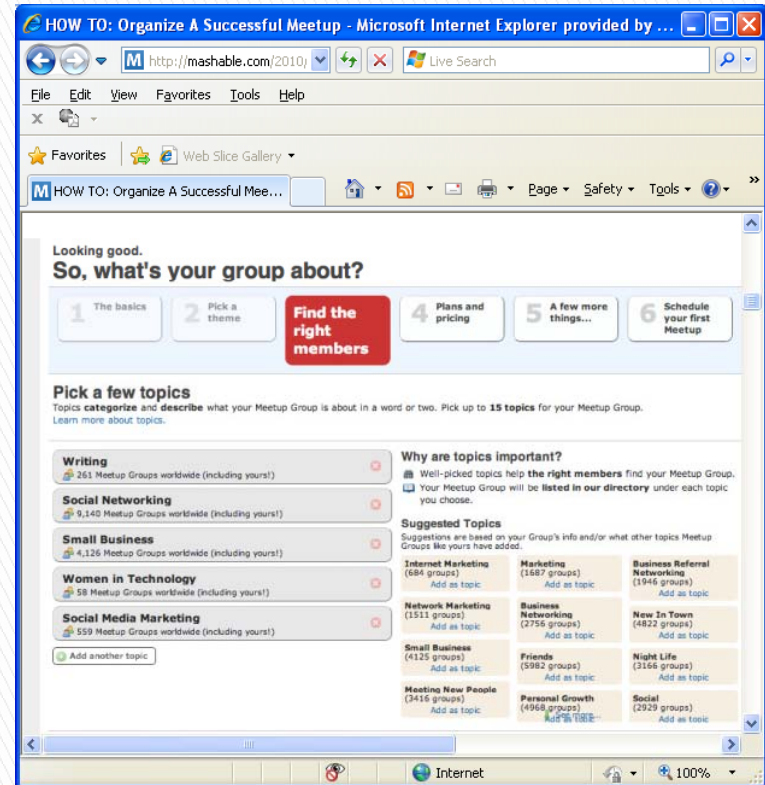
<http://www.meetup.com/wonro40/members/>



Using Meetup for Professional or Networking Purposes

- ▶ Why your Meetup?
- ▶ Create a Meetup Group
- ▶ Grow membership
- ▶ Format
- ▶ Venue
- ▶ Day of the meetup
- ▶ Sponsorships
- ▶ The future
- ▶ Keep connected

Meetup to network





Great tips here!

- ▶ “Guide to a Successful Meetup Group & Meetup Events”

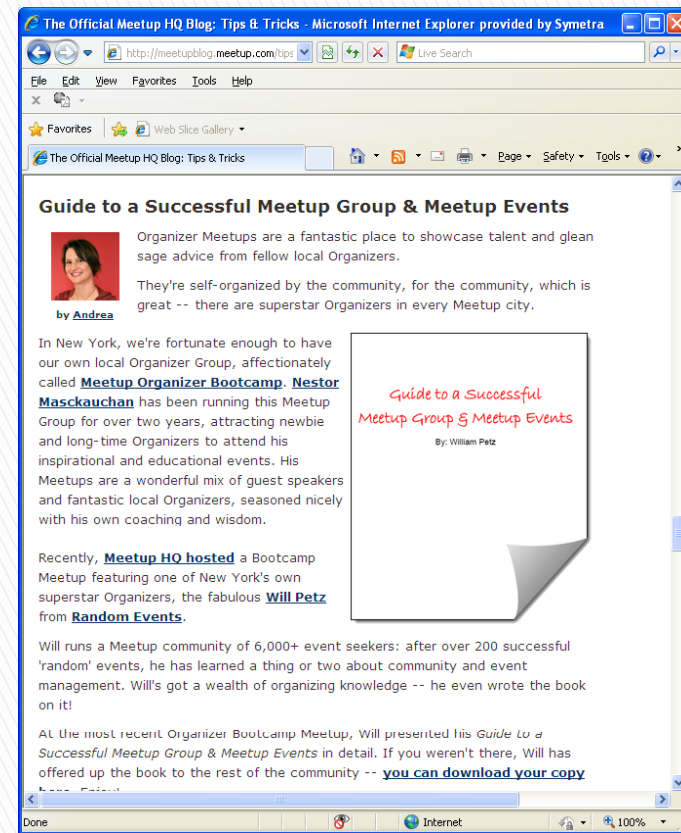
<http://meetupblog.typepad.com/.a/6a011571d38234970b015436a3592d970c-pi>

- ▶ “How to Use Meetup to Promote Your Business—Both Online and in Person”

<http://opensourcemarketer.com/9255/meetup-marketing-101/>

- ▶ “Tips & Tricks”—Official Meetup HQ Blog”

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Resources for ...

...great Meetup events



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